ties, which renders it so imperative on the part of the scientific inquirer to proceed in the inductive method. Had the works of God been differently disposed, and, in particular, had the various bodies been less complex in their relation to one another, it is conceivable that a different mode of investigation might have been available. Could the different properties of substances, as being kept clear and distinct, have been discovered by easy and direct observation, investigation would have consisted very much in inference, and the deductive method,, as the most practicable, would have been universally employed. It is the multiplicity of relations in the disposition of the physical world which so baffles all *a priori* speculation, and which compels the inquirer to begin with a laborious investigation of facts, with the view of determining the laws according to which they occur, that thence lie may rise to a knowledge of the properties of the different bodies. Hence, we suspect, the necessity for diligent observation and experiment, for careful compilation and co-ordination, before man can master any domain in nature. Had nature been throughout at once simple and clear in the order which it follows, we cannot see that there should have been such need of a laborious preparation. In such a state of things, man could have determined beforehand what nature must be in every one of its territories, as easily as the astronomer can tell the position of the moon or planets ten or twenty years hence.

There is one penetrating (though offensively arrogant) thinker of our day, who has not overlooked this characteristic of nature. We allude to M. Augusle Comte, who, in his work on Positive Philosophy, has given a classification of the sciences, arranged according as the phenomena of "which they treat are more or less simple, or less or more complicated.*

" In considering," he says, " observable phenomena, we shall sec that it is possible to classify them into a small number of natural categories, disposed in such a manner that the natural study of eauh category may be founded on the principal laws of the preceding category, and become the foundation of that which follows. *This order is determined by the degree of siwplicity, or that which cornea to the same thing, 'by the degree of generality of phenomena, from which result, their mutual dependence and the greater or less facility of atu.dying them,* Ifc ia clear, iu fact, *a prıcri,* that the phenomena which are the most simple, those which complicate themselves the least -with the others, are also tho most goneral."f Following this principle, he arranges phenomena into two great divisions—those that are unorganized being the most simple, and those that are organized being more complicated. Taking up inorganic nature, he places (after mathematics) astronomy at the head of his hierarchy of the natural sciences. " Astronomical phenomena being the most general, the most simple, the most abstract, it is evidently by the study of them that **we** ought to commence natural philosophy; and the laws to 'which they arc subjected have an intluence on

those of all other phenomena, while they are themselves, on the other hand, essentially in<lcpcn» dcnt."J He then goes on to show that terrestrial physics is a more complicated science than astronomy. "The simple movement of a falling body, even when it is a solid, presents, in reality, when we take into account all the determining circumstances, a subject of research more complicated than Ihe most difficult question of astronomy."^ Proceeding to terrestrial physics, he shows that it is capable of being divided into two parts, according as we examine bodies under a mechanical or comical point of view. Of these the former is evidently thu eimpler and more general, as all the properties of matter considered in physics,

Seo Appendix V. on tho Lmiu; WUITKIIH wno TKBAT OK Tin iNmrcrivg PHILOSOPHY.

t Vol. i. pp. 86, 8>. J P. 01. § P. >2.